

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Governor Barbour Announces \$23 Million for CHIP Kids**

*Potential cash shortfall averted*

(Jackson, Mississippi) – Governor Haley Barbour announced today that a potential funding shortfall for the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) this year will be covered by the reallocation of \$23 million in federal funds.

Governor Barbour said he was notified today by Health and Human Services Secretary Michael O. Leavitt that Mississippi Medicaid will receive an additional \$23 million in a reallocation of funds under legislation passed by Congress and signed by the President.

“I am grateful to Congress, President Bush and Secretary Leavitt for responding to an acute need by providing additional federal funds for this important program,” Governor Barbour said. Without the additional funds, Mississippi faced a serious shortfall for this program that provides health benefits for more than 60,000 children age 18 and younger.

Mississippi offers children enrolled in CHIP a comprehensive major medical package that also includes dental, hearing and vision care, prescription drug coverage and immunizations.

The Mississippi Division of Medicaid is charged with the day-to-day CHIP activities, including determination and redetermination of CHIP applicants. Applications for CHIP are available at many locations that serve children’s needs, such as Medicaid Regional Offices, local health departments, community health centers, rural health clinics, and some hospitals and private clinics.

It’s important to apply for health benefits, which includes Medicaid and CHIP, before your children become ill. Benefits under CHIP are not retroactive. Families are urged to apply to see if their children are eligible.

To apply an in-person interview is required along with:

- Proof of family income for the most recent full month
- Original birth certificates for all applying
- Social Security Numbers for each person applying

For more information about CHIP or Medicaid for your children, call 1-877-KIDS-NOW (1-877-543-7669).

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